



News for Immediate Release
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Contacts:

- [Don Strickland](#), Information Officer, (916) 653-9515
- [Ted Thomas](#), Information Officer, (916) 653-9712

DWR Monitoring Second Twitchell Island Sinkhole

SACRAMENTO – Department of Water Resources (DWR) personnel continue to assist Reclamation District 1601 staff members with monitoring of a second sinkhole discovered Friday in the Twitchell Island levee where an initial depression was discovered last Wednesday.

The second sinkhole is approximately 900 feet to the east of the first one. It was found by Reclamation District staff driving over it and noting a bump. A small depressed area was excavated with a backhoe. Below the surface was a horizontal round-shaped void about six inches wide.

Observers believe that a crack was on the bottom of this void and also noted a depressed area running oblique across the levee crown (at about a 45 degree angle) from the riprap-covered river slope across the levee crown to the landside crown edge. It's believed that this was some sort of degraded crack/offset in the levee crown. Some observers also reported they could see minor irregular depressions and bulges lower on landside slope.

Both distressed areas remain relatively minor for Delta levees. Monitoring over the weekend found no change at either site, despite periods of high tide. The Reclamation District's engineer, KSN, is having surveys conducted of the levee crown and cross sections made at several locations. DWR and KSN are coordinating today on installation of four inclinometers, two at each site, and to have bathymetric surveys taken. The inclinometer borings will be logged to help develop a geotechnical cross section for use in further evaluations.

Most of the 3,516 acre Island is owned by DWR. Although farming continues, some of the island is in a wetlands restoration program and organic carbon management research projects are being conducted there. Peat soils on Twitchell were gradually lost during the 20th century due to agricultural practices and much of the island is below sea level.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

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